**Poetry Explication**

**Due Dates: Poetry Explication Worksheet due with final draft of essay (below and on Wiki)**

**Rough Draft: Friday May 4 for in class peer review**

**Final draft: Wednesday by 10:00 pm on May 9 to our shared Box Folder**

**100 points**

**Assignment:** You may pick any poem that you would like with the exception of poems we have discussed as a class. Consider choosing a poem that you found from the poetry speed dating exercise, but be sure to choose a poem that is appropriate for this assignment. Don’t choose a poem that is overly simply and has little to discuss, nor should you choose a poem that is extremely complicated to explain (probably at least 14 lines).

To explicate a poem is to essentially *explain* *how* the writer conveys the meaning of the poem. What is the poet saying and how is he/she saying it? There is certainly more than one right answer to this question, so your goal is to provide sufficient support and evidence from the text. Think of this explication as a cousin of the persuasive essay—you need to convince your reader of the meaning of the poem by showing them where and explaining how.

The writing process for the assignment:

1. Read the poem aloud.

2. Look up any words that are unfamiliar or don’t seem to fit your understanding of the word.

3. Read the poem again.

4. Complete the Poetry Explication Worksheet (page 3) and use it to construct your essay.

-Determine the major themes or messages that are conveyed.

-Determine which lines from the poem convey that theme or message.

-Unpack these lines for the reader by

--explaining what the line/phrase actually means (summarize)

--explaining *how* the line relates to the main theme

5. Begin crafting a draft of the essay based on the ideas you gathered in the worksheet.

6. Bring rough draft of essay to be peer reviewed on Friday May 4

7. Revise essay

8. Submit final draft to Box folder by Wednesday, May 9, and label it “Poetry, last name”

Consider using poetic devices to describe some of the lines in the text. For example, when unpacking or explaining a given line, you could note that the line is a metaphor. As we know, metaphors compare two things, so you could begin by explaining the two things being compared.

Be careful not to simply summarize the poem. Use topically focused paragraphs to argue your point. You also do not need to explain every single line and word in the poem. Choose the most powerful lines and the lines that best support the message.

**You will be required to find and use 1 secondary source from only the course project page as support for YOUR analysis (YOU CAN DO IT!).** Craft your explication FIRST and then find sources that support your position. Remember signal phrasing and ways of seamlessly incorporating your quotes into the sentences—AND IN-TEXT CITATIONS.

Of course do not forget general writing elements such as an effective introduction, strong thesis, well organized internal paragraphs, examples and details to support your argument, a strong conclusion, and make sure the essay is free of all grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors.

**Purpose:** To explicate a poem using lines from the poem for support.

**Audience:** I am your audience but assume that I don’t understand the message of the poem.

**Format:** MLA format, typed and double spaced in 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins.

Since you are writing the essay, I know this will be your opinion, so use 3rd person ONLY.

You must also include MLA in-text citations and a bibliography for ALL sources.

And remember, when writing about literature, use literary present tense (write about the poem as though the literature exists in the present).

The essay should be approximately **3-4** **pages**.

**Poetry Explication Title of Poem\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Author’s Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| What is the theme, main idea, or message of the poem? |

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| What lines represent this theme?  Include the line and the line number | What poetic devices do you see represented in these lines? | HOW do the lines relate, support, convey, and/or communicate this theme? |
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